



Nation

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uranium development**

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And they're off

by Lyle Stewart

By the time you read this, Stephen Harper will have triggered the longest, and most costly, federal election in Canada's history.

Under the Conservative's fixed-election law, which Harper ignored back in 2011, the next vote is scheduled for Oct. 19. Given recent practice, a typical five-week campaign should have kicked off in early September.

Now we are faced with a campaign lasting two-and-a-half months. There is no compelling reason for an election call now, and everyone knows that few people will be paying attention until the cottages are closed and the schools opened several weeks from now.

For Harper, however, there is one very compelling reason: money. He intends to buy, cheat and, if past practice is any indication, steal another term in power.

Under the Conservatives' spectacularly misnamed Fair Elections Act, passed this past winter, the maximum campaign spending limit for each party is \$25 million. But the Fair Elections Act provided for the limits to be increased if the campaign is longer than 37 days: for each additional day the limit is increased by 1/37th, or an extra \$676,000.

And with a war chest twice the size of any competing party, the Conservatives will be able to bury Canadians under an avalanche of advertising. Expect most of that to come in the last few weeks of the campaign.

Taxpayers will be shelling out bigger bucks, too – millions in extra administrative costs and tens of millions more in rebates to parties and candidates for their inflated election expenses. Elections Canada estimates that a campaign of 37 days would cost roughly \$375 million to administer. This one will be twice as long.

There's another consideration. Even though, when he headed the right-wing cor-

porate lobby group called the National Citizens Coalition, Harper advocated against limits on election spending by outside groups, that calculation has changed.

Many civil society groups, appalled by the policies wrought by the government on everyone from First Nations, community groups, anti-poverty organizations, environmentalists and union members – in other words, most Canadians – have been leading their own campaigns to encourage Canadians to vote Harper out. Once the writ is dropped however, they face severe limits on their spending and political activity.

All Canadians, but especially members of First Nations, need to pay close attention to Harper's disastrous record. Then they need to show up and vote on Oct. 19.

For many, we know it won't be easy. The Conservatives' voter-suppression tactics will make it much more difficult. And the new law forbids Elections Canada even from encouraging people to vote.

Now, however, the stakes are too high to be apathetic. The Harper government is turning Canada into a rogue state internationally, and a police state at home. Anyone who opposes government policy, under Bill C-51, could now reasonably expect to be spied upon, arrested on the flimsiest of pretexts and detained for at least a week.

Organizations opposed to environmental pillaging or corporate abuses are already being denounced as "terrorists," finding themselves audited by Revenue Canada and being forced to publicly reveal their intimate financial details. And all this as wealth becomes concentrated in ever fewer hands and the vast majority find it more and more difficult to earn a living income.

This election will be the most important in a generation. It's time for real change in Ottawa.

Contents

editorial

And they're off 3

rez notes

Space oddities 4

news

BAPE rejects uranium development 5

Inuit art at NFC 7

features

Mamoweedow 10

In Memory of Kevin Loon 17

Digital divide 18

Big Rock Fishing Derby 19

Wabun Youth Gathering 21

Artist Shane Perley-Dutcher 22

Barbecuing blowout 24

UTNS

Wabun Youth Gathering inspires hope 26



photo by
Umbreen Butt

Space oddities

by Sonny Orr



Looking at the moon, clean and bright against the sunny sky in the crisp, deep blue openness of a July moment, made me remember Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon. It was July 20, 1969, and even though we couldn't see anything happening a quarter-million miles away, to the mind of a 10-year-old, it was a golden moment crowning my next day birthday as being the most memorable of my life. Getting to the moon was no longer impossible and afterwards, well, it just became one of those rolling balls of wool on a snowy hill, ever growing and hard to stop. Technology was everywhere it seemed.

Growing up in the 1960s, when no one had power hookups or running water, the latest transistorized trends were already in our hands: portable record players that ran on batteries. In those days, it wasn't about worrying that your technology wouldn't work, it was about whether or not you had enough energy stored in your batteries to sustain a small outdoor teen dance.

The Archies reigned in teeny-bop world and topping that off was internationally known Bobby Sherman, who was known for his wardrobe and good looks more than his singing style. That bubble burst quickly with liquid acid rock like Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin and in the altered states of hippiedom, John Lennon.

I wasn't sure if it was the new generation, the change in culture, the access to the South, the sudden interest of the South in Eeyou Istchee's natural resources that put us at the centre of attention. What, Indians with power? From where? These were common questions at the time, as we constantly drew the maps of our cultures and lands every time someone new came by, like consultants or government representatives, explaining that we do have an active lifestyle that is rooted in Cree culture. It always amused me when the next document produced is virtually the same

thing I explained to the consultant, except in glossy format. So, a few generations beyond the historic step on the moon, are we anywhere close to where we wanted to be?

Looking back at our evolution from Armstrong's historic moment in space and time, we certainly see things differently today. Back in the day, it was about maintaining an orderly way of life on the lands we called Eeyou Istchee. Today, we only practice our traditions and livelihoods of the past.

Back then, schools didn't allow us to speak our language. Today, it's taught in all the schools. Back then, water was hauled from one of the world's largest freshwater sources – Chisasibi – on our backs and yokes in 10-gallon pails. Today, filtered and chemically treated waters piped to our homes have replaced the fresh spring water sources. Back then, as a hunter, you had to be able to call all kinds of birds. Now, our iPods do the calling for us. Paddling down the rivers, snowshoeing for miles on end, you get the idea. Life today isn't the same as in the past.

So what would our next rocket scientist graduate be able to do for us today? Perhaps eliminate diabetes and find a cure for lethargy, laziness and languor? Maybe even invent a better canoe or snowshoe, a better fishnet or hockey stick. A safer gun or lifejacket, a better tent or waterproof fire starters. My favourite would be the sparkplug that never quits or axe that never goes dull or right up there, a snowmobile that doesn't get stuck in the deep snow or slush.

Whatever it takes to make our future brighter and better, I say. So why can't we, I dare ask. Why can't we? This question brings me back to the present place in space and time, the answer still floating around in deep space of an alternate universe that could have been...

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BAPE rejects uranium development

Commission report supports Cree opposition to Matoush project

by Jeremy East

A long-anticipated report from Quebec's Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) says that authorizing uranium development in the province would be inappropriate in the present context.

Released July 17, the report follows months of public consultations throughout Cree territory and the rest of Quebec. The 626-page document mainly addresses the environmental concerns related to uranium development that Crees brought to several BAPE hearings.

"In the commission's view, the Quebec government could decide to suspend uranium mining either temporarily or permanently," said the report. "The participants at the hearings were almost unanimous in their rejection of uranium sector development."

The report cites the lack of consensus surrounding the environmental and health concerns that come with uranium development as a catalyst for exercising caution.

"In Quebec, the exploitation of our natural resources must be done in a responsible manner, and never at the expense of the population's safety or the quality of our social environments," Environment Minister David Heurtel said in a statement.

The commission's lengthy public consultation process visited several Cree communities in 2014. That year, the Cree Nation Government launched a highly publicized campaign against uranium development. A group of Cree youth were the face of the campaign, which culminated in their 800-km walk from Mistissini to Montreal, where Youth Grand Chief Joshua Iserhoff spoke before the commission at its final consultation in December.

Now, seven months later, it appears this firm environmental stance has fortified Cree hopes for a uranium-free future.

"The BAPE's report confirms what the Cree Nation has long maintained: that uranium development poses unique and significant risks for our lands, our environment, our communities and our future generations," said Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come. "We have said from the start that once Quebecers learn the facts about uranium, the risks it poses, and the ques-



tions that cannot be adequately answered, they would join with us in opposing uranium development."

Indeed, the Cree Nation was not alone in its opposition to uranium development in Quebec. The one-year inquiry generated the largest number of public submissions ever seen at the BAPE. Ultimately, the report found that rejection of uranium development was almost unanimous in areas where mines could potentially be located. Protests against development have stretched from Eeyou Istchee to Sept-Îles, where a group of 20 doctors vowed to leave the region if uranium mining went forward.

Canada is currently the world's second largest uranium producer, yielding about 20% of the world's primary uranium supply. The country's supply is sourced entirely from northern Saskatchewan, but the industry has been working to gain a foothold in Quebec for the last decade. The province's main deposits are located on the North Shore of the St. Lawrence River and throughout Cree territory and the James Bay watershed.

When Strateco Resources began to establish plans for uranium development in the Otish Mountains near Mistissini in 2008, concern began to mount. In 2013, the provincial government placed a moratorium on development pending an environmental review. Over the next year, dozens of Eeyou came forward to caution the BAPE that uranium development would endanger the Cree way of life.

"This is something that we take to heart," said Mistissini Youth Chief Amy Linton in December. "The radioactivity that would affect Mistissini for thousands of years would be devastating to our people and all the people of Quebec."

Strateco Resources filed for bankruptcy protection last month and is currently seeking funding to finance a \$190-million lawsuit against the Quebec government for effectively shutting down the Matoush project.

Cree leadership is celebrating their BAPE victory, but the favourable report does not guarantee an end to uranium mining in Quebec. The provincial government will form a committee to review the BAPE's findings and then come to a decision.

Additionally, the BAPE's report did not entirely discount potential for uranium mining down the road.



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Carving out a space for Inuit art

Inuit carvers in Montreal get the show the community has been waiting for

by Jesse Staniforth



"You're going to be so impressed with the work we have here!" beamed Makivik Corporation consultant Sylvie Cornez, curator of the exhibition Taku ("see" in Inuktitut), which featured the work of Inuit sculptors from Montreal's Native Friendship Centre (NFC) and the related Mikinak Youth Co-op.

The exhibition, which ran from July 30 to August 5 during the First Peoples' Festival, took place at Galerie Carte Blanche in downtown Montreal. Carvers did daily demonstrations of their work, and guides offered to lead spectators to see the finished pieces up close.

The Makivik Corporation participated in organizing the show, in partnership with the NFC, Mikinak, the Chez Doris women's shelter, the Open Door homeless outreach organization that serves many of the city's homeless Inuit people, and the Projet Autochtone Québec, which offers a night shelter for Aboriginal people.

At the Mikinak Co-op, Inuit sculptors – many of whom are extremely poor – have long gathered to enjoy one another's company and to work on their art.

They're locally known for producing breathtaking work, but have struggled for years to gain compensation reflecting the value of their art.

"The objective behind the project is to develop economic opportunities for the carvers," Cornez explained. "Makivik has had a plan of action for the last five years to help Inuits in difficulty in Montreal. Mikinak helps the Inuit youth through carving and helps them sell their work through the co-op, and this project is an extension of that."

Mikinak offers a space where the carvers can work, and Cornez says that Makivik invested to upgrade the space with ventilation in order to allow the carvers to do larger and more personally innovative work.

"But," she adds, "it's still a carving room in which you can do pieces of a certain size. We had to rent other carving rooms to do larger pieces, because you're involving electrical tools, and it creates a lot of dust. So we're still struggling with all that, but it's been a great learning experience in that sense – when you produce bigger pieces, you need better ventilation for the carvers, things like that."

The carvers are used to producing pieces small enough to hold in one hand, so Cornez said they needed at first to be encouraged to take advantage of the larger pieces of stone the Makivik investment in the program provided them.

"We got a grant from the Urban Partnership. We certainly were able to buy nice stones and produce a good show," she said. "I've been pushing them to go big, really big. I say, 'I'm giving you this stone – use it!' It's funny to see the evolution. Now you see the result and we can show the artists: 'Look at what you've done: this is what you were doing before, and here's what you did today!' And hopefully we'll be able to sell them."

Native and Inuit artists have traditionally found it hard to make a decent profit on their works in Montreal. Many non-Indigenous galleries take a cut of up to 80% of any money earned on their pieces. Following on the fair-trade examples of galleries like the Ashukan Cultural Space and the Canadian Guild of Crafts, Makivik offers the artists a 50/50 split.

"Even with that, they didn't understand why they were giving so much to us," Cornez said. "We had to show them what we're doing – I put in a lot of hours. There's communications. The carvings don't sell by themselves. What does it cost to have a gallery, to produce posters?"

Those are all the things we're looking at with this project."

All those aspects are part of the eventual goal of the project, which is to help the carvers mount their own Inuit art space, with a properly outfitted carving area in the back, and a gallery in the front to sell their art.

"This is their dream," said Cornez, "and this is where we're going. We want to give them that opportunity to realize their dream. We're pretty much convinced this is the beginning of a series of Taku. And we hope Taku will grow into the space they want it to be."

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Condo project on contested island wins legal round

A civil lawsuit to stop the controversial Zibi condominium development on Chaudière Island in the Ottawa River was dismissed by an Ontario Superior Court on July 13. Chaudière Island (connected to Victoria Island) sits in the middle of Akikpautik, the Chaudière Rapids, which has been a sacred site for the Algonquins of the area for centuries.

According to lawyer Michael Swinwood, who represented plaintiff Stacy Amikwabi on behalf of the Amikwabi Nation and Algonquins in Ontario and Quebec, Justice Tom Lederer considered the lawsuit too vague. As well, the judge said Amikwabi's claims to Indigenous title on the island near downtown Ottawa were suspect.

Amikwabi, a registered Ojibway who identifies as Algonquin, hails from Pickerel, Ontario, roughly six hours west of Ottawa. According to his lawyer, Amikwabi filed the suit because he does not recognize the authority of the Algonquin band councils negotiating with the governments of Quebec and Ontario over land title.

The judge added that the owners of the property, Windmill Development Group, might be subject to the defense of being "innocent purchasers," having had no involvement in traditional title disputes between Indigenous

people on the land and the government of Canada. Nonetheless, other legal challenges to the development will continue.

Architect Douglas Cardinal (who designed the Canadian Museum of Civilization, now known as the Canadian Museum of History) worked for 30 years with the late Algonquin Elder William Commanda on a plan to turn the two islands into Asinabka, a national historical centre with a powwow ground, teepee village, and Indigenous centre. In 2014, Cardinal filed a currently pending appeal with the Ontario Municipal Board over that body's approval of a request to rezone the island for development of the Zibi project.

Asinabka organizers claim that the National Capital Commission cannot prove that the city of Ottawa holds title to the islands in the Chaudière Rapids.

FN electors called on to "Rock the Vote"

An Ojibway activist is launching a campaign to ensure that First Nations across Canada are able to exercise their right to vote.

Tania Cameron, of the Ochiichagwe'Babigo'Ining Ojibway Nation, is a onetime NDP candidate who has now shifted her focus from garnering votes to ensuring Native people get out to the polls.

"I'm calling for registration or ID clinics," Cameron says. "Communities should be hosting them once a month, at least, until the election."

Cameron has posted a Facebook page – First Nations Rock the Vote – on which Elections Canada forms can be filled out. It also provides information on what qualifies as sufficient ID to vote.

The idea is to mobilize the vote. The recently enacted Fair Elections Act requires voters to have two pieces of identification and eliminated the vouching process.

In order to mobilize the Native vote, First Nations communities must be aware of the new requirements they now face in order to drop a ballot in the ballot box come October.



photo: Shanta Rohse

Chaudière island and Victoria island





Summer on Fort George

The Nation spends several days getting
back to basics at Mamoweedow

Story by Joel Barde Photos by Umbreen Butt

It is early morning on Fort George Island, and 87-year-old Jade Matthew is building a teepee with her husband. Grabbing two long birch poles tied together at one end with bright red rope, they place the bottoms in the soil, forming an inverted V.

Jane moves deliberately, methodically placing the rest of the poles until the structure is formed. Two of her sisters – also both in their 80s – sit under a pine tree, watching.



The couple then hoist a canvas tarp around the bottom two-thirds of the teepee. Tying ropes to another tarp, they manoeuvre it into place, covering most of the top third but leaving a three-foot hole for the smoke.

"Everything tastes better when cooked over a fire," she tells me, taking

a break from the work. "The tea, the food, it all tastes different."

In a tight-knit Cree community of about 2,000 here, Jane, her husband and sisters all once lived in weather-beaten homes that lacked many modern comforts, such as running water. But in 1980 the community voted to leave.

The island, Hydro-Québec engineers told them, was unsafe. Just upriver, Hydro-Québec was building La Grande 2, a \$3.7 billion project that remains Canada's largest hydroelectric power station. And once completed, it would permanently alter the flow of La Grande River, which they said would cause erosion on the island.

"Everything tastes better when cooked over a fire," she tells me, taking a break from the work. "The tea, the food, it all tastes different."



A bigger worry was if the dam failed and a wall of water would submerge the island and its people.

About 200 homes were removed, cut off at the bottom, placed on barges and relocated to the new mainland community of Chisasibi. The single-family homes were neatly placed along a suburban grid that one can see on the outskirts of any Canadian city.

Fort George, however, has remained an important place for the people of Chisasibi. Each summer, Jane and much of Chisasibi return for the annual Mamoweedow festival. It's a week full of laughter, traditional food and reaffirming connections – both to traditional Cree culture and other community members.

Like many First Nations communities, Chisasibi is growing: the 2010 census lists 4,484 residents, though

that number is likely higher now. And it boasts a young population, with 35% of its population under the age of 14.

As down south, many complain that the increase in technology – the cellphones, computers and televisions – are causing the community to splinter, losing some of the closeness that marked life on Fort George Island.

Not so different

Jane's daughter, Emilie Matthew, helped go door-to-door to gather ballots on whether or not the community should move to Chisasibi. It was contentious, she says, declining to elaborate any further.

Emilie and her husband, Ernie Sam, grew up on the island. They both attended residential schools, she at an Anglican school, he at the

Catholic. School was strict, staffed by cold teachers with heavy hands. Being separated from their parents was challenging.

Summers, however, were different. It was theirs. Their parents returned to the island from their bush camps, and the kids were free.

Emilie would follow her mother and sisters through the island's forests, collecting berries and leaves to make Labrador tea. She learned how to hunt, build a teepee, and cook traditional foods. "I wanted to learn. So I always asked questions," she explains.

Ernie now runs a construction company out of Chisasibi and remembers his youthful summers with deep affection. There was a sawmill on the northern tip of the island that he said would dump sawdust in giant piles on the beach. He

and his friends would run to the top and then jump down, landing halfway down the slope.

The picture they drew – of an island that represented freedom and fun – paralleled the atmosphere of Mamoweedow. In the afternoon, teenagers threw footballs and Frisbees at a large grassy area while kids played with skipping ropes. Older people and parents hung out on picnic tables, talking among themselves, reconnecting.

A young girl showed her friends a baby bird she had found. One of its wings broken, the bird sat quietly in the girl's pocket.

Other kids just chased each other around, playing late into the evening. There's no curfew for kids during the festival, one parent told me, nor is any alcohol permitted on the island. Some credited that rule with helping to create a safe space, where they feel comfortable giving kids more freedom to roam about.

The Big Tent

Every night, people gathered in the big tent, a 100-foot long hall lit with long lines of florescent bulbs hanging from the ceiling.

Some took part in square dances while others played games. Karaoke and an open mic catered to those who wanted to perform.

Adele Snowboy-Napash was there throughout, late into the night. For the past six years, she has served as the president of the event's organizing committee. Along with her sister, Anne-Marie, she runs most of the games and introduces the musical acts.

"Did you hear my Cree," she said with her quick, infectious laugh during a rare break. "Even I was making some mistakes. They were laughing at me!"

One of the goals of the festival is to strengthen the Cree language and



It is early morning on Fort George Island, and 87-year-old Jade Matthew is building a teepee with her husband.



Jessica Frigon



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keep it relevant to young people, she said. Some of the familiar music performed was translated into Cree. A group of women sang versions of “Jolene” and “Coal Miner’s Daughter”.

Adele said it’s important for people to be immersed in traditional culture, and to realize that they can survive and thrive without modern technology. That said, going back to basics could be challenging for some. Even her grandson, who spent the opening day at the festival, couldn’t handle it. After one night he wanted to go home to his video games, television and Facebook.

“We’re going to bring him back,” said Adele. “I feel bad that he’s missing this.”

Cooking for many

The festival is funded with a grant from Niskamoon, fundraising, and sometimes money from the band council.

Some of the budget money pays for food. Two meals – breakfast and dinner – are provided to everyone that attends, all prepared and offered in a massive, 20-foot tall teepee. It’s a welcoming space, with a constant stream of kids and adults filling up on juice, coffee and fresh bannock throughout the day.

An eight-foot cooking fire pit occupied the middle of the teepee. A giant vat sat on a grill atop it, boiling bear meat. Bannock was wrapped along the end of five-foot sticks and propped up on the edge of the fire pit. Moose meat and blowfish were smoked high above the fire.

Country music played in the background from a radio in the cooking section. Several chatting, laughing women were cutting carrots, washing dishes and frying fish.

One of the first-time cooks was Roselea Bearskin. At 21, she’s been coming to Mamoweedow her entire life. For Roselea, Mamoweedow is a way to “get away from everything.”



Life in Chisasibi can be challenging, she noted. Mamoweedow is like a vacation, a week to connect with family and community over good food and games.

During this week she was pulling double duty. In addition to the cooking, she took care of her two younger sisters, who ran around at night with bright LED lights strapped to their heads.

Her favourite festival memories were from the same age, when she took part in the games in the big tent. She hasn’t done that for a while, since she was 15. “I started growing up – maybe a bit too fast. And right now, I’m too shy to play in front of a lot of people.”

Roselea has done a lot of traditional cooking at home with her family, and she moved with confidence, rotating the bannock and ensuring it’s properly cooked. But this was the first time cooking on a major scale. She said she learned new things from her Elders every day.

Back with Jane

Not everyone ate dinner in the big teepee. For Jane and her family, preparing food was a big part of their fun.

One rainy morning she was roasting a duck over the fire. It hung beside

the fire, from a rope with four knots evenly spaced apart. Using a stick to wind it, the duck slowly turned beside the small fire as the cord unwound. “You know it’s ready when it begins to steam from the sides,” she explained.

Her daughter, son-in-law, sister and great-grandson sat opposite as she relaxed, lying on her side on the soft, green pine needles cushioning the floor of the teepee. They talked among themselves in Cree, but there were long periods of silence, when all you hear is the sound of the heavy rain beating against the canvas. She likes that sound, Jane murmured as the tantalizing aromas of duck and bannock filled the teepee.

There’s something tremendously satisfying and tranquil about the whole experience, just watching food cook on an open fire, with three generations of a family. It’s a scene repeated in dozens of families around the island. They come together, hang out, and get to know each other on a deeper level, free from the many distractions of modern life.

The spirit of life at Fort George lives on at Mamoweedow, revisiting a time when summers were free and life was much more simple.

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In Memory of Kevin Loon

My Baby Bro!

My brother was a gift from God! Not only a gift from God but a gift which Diane, Kevin's biological mother, made possible. Diane, your gift to us allowed us to love him unconditionally. Many in the Cree Nation and in the Innu Nation loved him. Diane and family, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

He was two days old when my family adopted him. Hold out your hand, like this, that was how small he was. Two pounds! He was a fighter right from the start, never gave up! I remember the day very clearly when my parents asked us what we would think if we had a baby in the family. I remember feeling very excited because, being the only boy in my family, I get to have a brother, I thought to myself. Not that I have anything against my sisters and I enjoyed getting spoiled up to that point.

My baby brother was always by my side. Whenever I wouldn't be home when it was his bedtime, he would wait up for me. When he knew I was home, he would come into my room. He even wanted to sleep in my bed whenever I would have my girlfriend over.

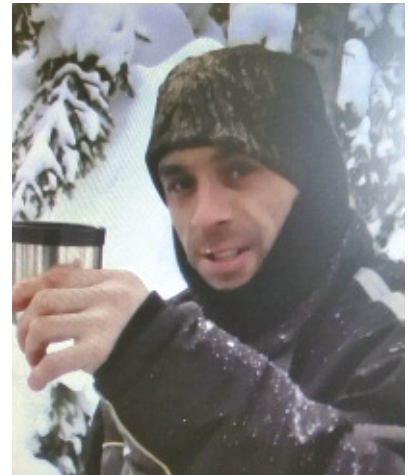
My parents relied on him to keep me on the straight path. My parents would ask him to accompany me wherever I would go. I enjoyed his company. One Goose Break, they told him to go with me to Mistissini to get supplies we needed. We took off early in the morning to go to Mistissini and got back to the camp in no time! I told him not to tell my dad how fast we were going. But, being the reliable baby brother he was, he told my dad we went 120 to 130 km/h. He got me into trouble.

My brother had a hard time dealing with the passing of our father. He

did not know how to deal with his passing. He didn't understand how we were able to "move on" and felt alone. He was stuck in his grieving. I am thankful that his friends were there for him. Nathan, Lee Roy, Marcel, Eric, Ben, Patrick, Benjamin, Joe Max, Pelle, Nathaniel, Ernest and many others, thank you for being there for my brother. Recently, I noticed he was living life and I believed he had finally stopped his grieving for our late father, Allan. He started to enjoy life out on the land, taking every opportunity to spend time out there. In his previous hunting trips, he would come over to our place and he would say, "I didn't get a moose bro, but I'll bring some moose meat for you and your family." On his last trip and with the news that they got moose, I believe my brother finally got his moose.

My brother's legacy was his ability, without hesitation, to help others. He never refused helping another person when they asked for his help. He had a disability but never ever let it interfere with his life. He did not, ever, quit and never did I hear him say that he couldn't do anything! He was friendly to everyone! You met him on the street, driving by in a car or in a distance; he would greet you with a big smile and wave. I never thought I would do his eulogy, this early, or that he would be the one doing my eulogy. But here I am, sharing his eulogy to thousands of people. That was my brother though he had many friends across the Cree Nation and the Innu Nation.

The first thing my mother asked when I told her the news of my brother's passing was, "What am I going to do now?" Mom, Kevin is in a better place and with dad. You did



Kevin Loon

a wonderful job raising a loving, caring, fun and a very respectful young man! I love you mom!

To my baby bro Kevin Lee, we love you and we miss you. You have a beautiful daughter and we promise to continue your loving and caring ways with her. When I look at her, I see you when you were her age. I see the most special trait you had, in her, saying things out of the blue and making us laugh. He was always so proud of her, always introducing her as, his daughter Tamara.

On behalf of my family and the Bosum family, we are extremely grateful to family, friends, and the staff of the Cree Nation of Mistissini, the Chief and Council, the Cree Nation and to many, many others who have stood by our side. Your kind gestures and continuous prayers have been of great comfort. Tragedies are not one wishes for but there is comfort in knowing that this tragedy has resulted in my gaining a brother, Jason, thank you for coming into my life and into my family's life.

We love you all and God bless you all!

Thank you!
Clifford Loon

Digital divide

Crees fight for faster internet service

by Joshua Grant

Cree internet subscribers are increasingly fed up with the inferior telecommunications services provided to their communities. Now the Cree Nation Government (CNG) and the Eeyou Communications Network (ECN) are taking action to improve broadband access for the Crees.

A CNG-ECN submission to the Canadian Radio Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), "Review of Telecommunications Service, Basic Services Objections," requests an audience at a CRTC public hearing next April.

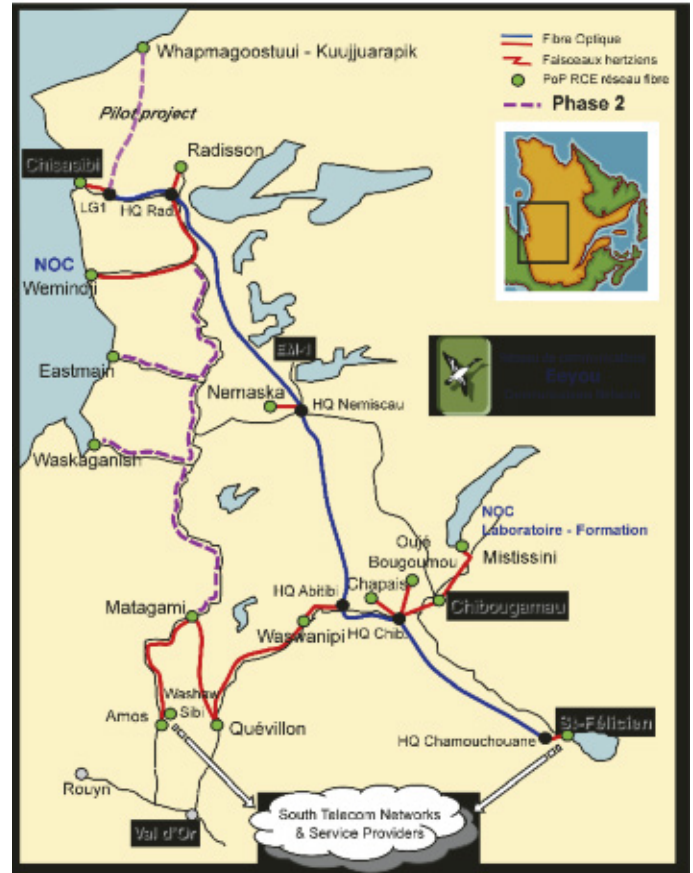
The Cree Nation is calling upon the CRTC and the Canadian government to bring rural and remote communities up to the Canadian standard of telephone, internet and broadband service. The submission argues that health and education institutions as well as household consumers deserve a "basic service objective." The service provided doesn't even meet most third world standards according to Cree studies.

"This is the bar for the 21st century," reads the submission. "When telecoms service providers are receiving up to \$750,000 in subsidies and failing to meet these marks, something is clearly wrong."

The quality of telecommunications services offered to areas outside large urban centres is significantly lower throughout Canada. Rural and remote areas suffer from corporate indifference, lack of infrastructure and reluctance to invest. The "digital divide" between urban and rural areas is widely unequal, despite the fact that these underserved communities already have the technology necessary to meet the needs and demands of their communities.

The big players – Bell, Telus and Rogers – are able to offer the mainstream connection that Cree clients crave, but their services fail to meet modern standards. In northern James Bay, according to the CNG-ECN submission, Telebec and Bell Aliant offer an "up to" 10 megabyte per second connection but rarely deliver. Fibre-optic connections exist in eight of the Cree communities but aren't efficiently utilized.

The CNG and ECN are calling upon the CRTC and the government of Canada to undertake a review of the services that are provided in northern Quebec and to consider



the "best available service" based on the technology available in the different areas of the province.

Because of this the ECN and CNG are insisting on increased investment, maintenance and upgrade of the internet services provided in James Bay.

The presentation to the CRTC proposes a number of changes and adaptations to the funding of telecommunications endeavours. Internet services have become a key element in socioeconomic development.

The ECN, the mission is to make available bandwidth that respects the needs of its users (health, education, and ISPs) at the lowest cost. In so doing, all users benefit as the open-access model makes a significant supply of bandwidth available to all users at reasonable rates."

Fishing Derby successful despite controversy

Competitive Mistissini event offers serious prizes

by Joshua Grant

Mistissini's second annual Big Rock Fishing Derby offered competitors a shot at close to \$100,000 in cash and prizes July 17-19. The top three finishers in the main Walleye category – Eric Menard, Ian Langdon and Martin

A coin toss determined that competition would alternate between the north and south sides of Lake Mistissini for the first two days, leading to some controversy and confusion, as some participants thought they would have access to the whole area for all three days.

"Flip a coin for next year," one person commented on the Facebook event, "because according to the rules people already assume that they can fish both sides."

The rules for the Big Rock derby state, "The fish entered must be able to swim away after the weigh-in" to be counted towards one's overall total. Some on Facebook complained about the number of boats in one area, the lack of weigh-in stations potentially affecting the chances of fish surviving long enough to be tallied, and the unexpected closure of one side of the lake on Friday and Saturday.

Coordinator Evadney Matoush responded to people's questions and concerns via social media, appearing to calm the controversy and maintain the derby's goal of creating a friendly atmosphere in the community.

Apart from the prizes in the main walleye competition, event organizers also dished out a number of awards for participation, including an Arctic Cat four-wheeler. A separate competition was held for the largest pike caught each day and a three-day total based on one pike per day.

Contestants finishing fourth to tenth in the overall walleye competition took home outdoor products including a canoe, a fish finder and electric motor, a 3500-watt genera-

tor, fishing gear, a chainsaw, propane stove and a GPS. Sylvain Deschenes, Daniel Hein, Jonathan Otter, Ginette Leberge, Jacob Gull, Johnny Awashish, Yvan Belanger and Stanley Mianscum rounded out the top 10.



Boisvert – walked away with \$30,000, \$15,000 and \$7500 for their cumulative catches over the three days, reeling in 22.31, 21.9 and 18.37 pounds, respectively.

"It was an awesome weekend," said organizer David Iserhoff. "Everyone had a blast. I saw people from Nemaska, Chisasibi, Oujé-Bougoumou, Waswanipi, Wemindji, Waskaganish and all over the James Bay."

Standard derby rules applied at the event, allowing groups of fishers a single rod and reel per person, requiring a minimum length of 15 inches to weigh and register a walleye and enforcing strict fishing hours, recorded on time cards each day. Only the two biggest walleye caught per day could be registered and marked, leading to a three-day overall total.



Gaston Cooper and his wife

Charity Taylor won the overall pike category, reeling in 27.77 pounds, and was followed by Melanie Coon Come, Wapikun Coonishish, Lizzie Mianscum and Willy Bosum in the top five. Pike winners, in order, went home with \$2000, \$1500, \$750, fishing gear and a GPS. The largest pike caught each day snagged a \$500 cash prize while the largest walleye each day garnered a cool \$2000.

Hundreds of people participated in the three-day derby in Mistissini, which attracted outdoor enthusiasts from all over Eeyou Istchee and the James Bay region.

"Overall it was definitely a successful event," organizer David Iserhoff told *the Nation*. "An awesome weekend and a great success."



Invitation to Waswanipi's 2015 Women's Fishing Derby

2nd Annual

August 21, 22 & 23
Location: Waswanipi
Post Landing



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at Waswanipi Women's Fishing Derby

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- New discovery
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- Complete the application form

Deadline and shipping:

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- The contest ends on October 31
- Shipping is at participant's expense

Don't forget:

- Hints on the ground: look for rusty surfaces
- Hints after breaking: sample metallic minerals

NAME _____
PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____
COMMUNITY _____

SAMPLE LOCATION PLACE NAME _____
MAP _____

GPS COORDINATES _____ E _____ N

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Looking to the future

Wabun Youth Gathering changes lives

by Xavier Kataquapit

The Wabun Youth Gathering celebrated its 9th year at its wilderness setting in Elk Lake's Eco Centre Lodge July 13-24. Dozens of Wabun youth attended the event.

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation (NAN) Grand Chief Harvey Yesno attended the gathering July 23 as guest speaker.

"I am happy that Wabun invited me to be at their youth gathering here today. If I have anything to offer, it is that each and every one of you, no matter what you are experiencing now or has happened to your past, look beyond the horizon and know that you can move ahead and do many wonderful things. Education is the key that will take you forward," said Yesno.

Coordinated by Faye Naveau, the event was sponsored by Wabun Tribal Council Health Services based in Timmins. Wabun leaders, Chief Walter Naveau of Mattagami FN, Chief Kevin Tangie of Brunswick House FN and Chief Marcia Brown Martel of Beaverhouse FN, spoke of their own life experiences.

"No one knows where their path will take them, as young people, I encourage you to listen to those Elders and teachers who are providing you with traditional and cultural awareness. Take those tools and skills that they are passing on to you and use them to make good decisions for your future," said Naveau.

Tangie spoke to the youth about bringing back the spirit of community to all the Wabun First Nations.

"I remember as a boy that my grandmother was a big part of my life and the Elders in the community were very helpful to all of the children. We have drifted away from that sense of community and now with traditional teachings and culture, we are finding our way back. Things are getting better for our young people," explained Tangie.

Brown-Martel was on hand for the duration of the gathering and worked closely with the youth as a chaperone.

The event was divided into two parts. The first week (July 13-17) was held for junior youth aged from eight to 12 and the second week (July 20-24) was for senior youth aged 13 to 18. The first week of events featured facilitators Craig Fox and his partner G'Wemin Migwans of Wikwemikong First Nation, traditional teachers and dancers who instructed the male and female youth on shield making, clay pottery and medicine pouches. They also led the junior youth in a mini powwow. The Big Bear Claw Singers of Brunswick House First Nation performed at the junior week mini powwow. Native storytellers Roger Jacklin and Lizz Brinootch of Magnetawan also entertained and educated the children.

The senior week featured workshops by Running Thunder Native Traditional dancers and teachers from



Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Grand Chief Harvey Yesno (far right) was a guest speaker at the Wabun Youth Gathering. Also pictured (l-r): Kaytlya Julien, Matachewan FN; and Mattagami FN members Kiara Constant, Emily Ludebeck, Kaylee Naveau, Koral Saile, Gillian Prince and Elizabeth Norman.

Edmonton. Medicine man and healer Ralph King of Rama First Nation led medicine walks for both the junior and senior groups.

The senior group powwow was led by the White Stone Cree Singers of Timmins, supported by Elder dancer George Rose and the Four Eagle White Women Singers of Timmins.

Jeremy Naveau, an 18-year-old member of Brunswick House FN, pointed out that one of the best things about the gathering was the opportunity to renew friendships with other youth from the Wabun territory.

"Every year I find I learn more about Native traditions and culture and that helps me with my life in the choices I make. I enjoyed the skits and role playing," commented Naveau.

Quinton Batise, an 11-year-old Matachewan FN member, participated in the junior week.

"This is my first time at the gathering and I had a lot of fun, learned things and met many new friends from other communities. I thank the Creator and everyone who gives us this gathering," commented Batise.

Elders Vina Hendrix of Matachewan FN and Morris Naveau of Mattagami FN assisted Wabun youth and led opening and closing prayers.

Wabun Health Director Jean Lemieux congratulated Wabun youth for making the ninth annual gathering a reality.

"I want to point out that this gathering is about helping our youth make good choices I look at all the young people here today and I want them to know that they are our leaders of tomorrow. We want them to take our jobs and fill our shoes and keep the circle strong. I offer up my thanks to NAN Grand Chief Harvey Yesno, the Chiefs of Wabun, our Elders, our Executive Director Shawn Batise and to our event coordinator Faye Naveau for making this year's event a success," said Lemieux.



from the **rez**
to the **city**

Messenger, Shane Perley-Dutcher

Shane Perley-Dutcher weaves things together. As a Maliseet man who grew up largely off the Nekkootkook (Tobique) First Nation to which he belongs, Perley-Dutcher has woven strands of his ancestral identity with experiences of present-day Maliseet culture, as well as European settler culture. As an artist, he has interlaced traditional and modern materials and styles, but has also woven together different mediums – precious metals, wood, drawings – into a distinct artistic texture. And in his remarkable jewellery, he has replicated traditional weaving styles in tiny patterns made of threads and bands of silver, gold and copper.

Even the title of Perley-Dutcher's first Montreal exhibition (at the Canadian Guild of Crafts until August 29, as part of the First People's Festival) is a kind of weaving: *Likchihikon Tisserand Weaver* is the same word in the three languages he grew up hearing in the Wolastoqiyik territory along the St. John River in New Brunswick.

"I grew up some part of my life on the reservation, but I spent most of my life and did my schooling off-reserve," said Perley-Dutcher at the opening of his exhibition. "That really adds an element to what I do. Through small pieces of exposure to different artists, different Elders, different people with traditional knowledge, I've had to start to understand who I am, my culture, where I come from, my worldview."

Trained as a silversmith at the New Brunswick College of Craft and Design in Fredericton, Perley-Dutcher has made a respected name for himself in artistic circles. However, more people will widely recognize his work than his name.

Perley-Dutcher was the artist former AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine called on

Artist Shane Perley-Dutcher weaves the strands of modern Indigenous identity

by Jesse Staniforth

to make the pin commemorating the Canadian government's official Residential Schools apology in 2008. (He says designing and making the 500 pins that were distributed to survivors across Canada was one of his proudest moments.) The next year, he made the crucifix that combined traditional and European materials and styles that Fontaine presented to Pope Benedict XIV at the Vatican in 2009 on the occasion of the Catholic Church's official apology for Residential Schools.

If people aren't more familiar with his work, it's because Perley-Dutcher doesn't go in for self-promotion, choosing instead to let his work sell itself. He makes that easier by keeping his prices strikingly low – enough so that he sold out of his entire stock at a recent juried exhibition at the National Museum of the American Indian in New York City. Yet he seemed just as excited about having an exhibition at a smaller gallery in Montreal.

"I've always been of the opinion that when opportunity shows itself, you go for it," he said. "There's only one answer. This is a great opportunity to showcase my work in a circle where I haven't exhibited before, so I worked basically around the clock to finish limited production of one-of-a-kind of jewellery and sculpture for the show."

The show mixes both mediums, but though the sculpture is large and prominent, the jewellery is worthy of close study. Perley-Dutcher's tiny details of woven metal aren't immediately obvious until you look closely, but then you wonder how he managed to pull it off. Much of the jewellery looks more as though it's been etched than pieced together carefully. For the artist, it's all the product of a state of flow.

"I always trust in the creative process. It's frustrating, but I allow emotion to happen," he said. "When I'm creating, I don't try to depict how

everything's going to go. I try to let it happen naturally. I'm always open to the fact that I'm going to make mistakes, and it's not going to work out – and that's okay."

Not knowing what the end product of his work will look like – or even what it will be – gives Perley-Dutcher energy and inspiration.

"One piece leads to another, and inspires another piece," he said. "When I'm not doing silverwork, I work with traditional materials. So I'll be working on one piece in one form, and I'll start to see ideas for another piece in another form. Creativity is transferable into a lot of different mediums."

All of the work, however, springs from the interwoven fibres of culture and experience that Perley-Dutcher encountered growing up between the white world and the reserve. His mother graduated high school and left the rez to pursue university in the city, taking young Perley-Dutcher with her. The experience marked him.

"You're already a minority," he observed. "But when you get off-reserve and move into an urban centre, you're an even smaller minority. You're an urban Aboriginal person now. You're not surrounded by the comfort of having your family right next to you. It's another barrier that she had to overcome."

It was through a Native friendship centre that Perley-Dutcher and his mother remained connected to their culture and traditions. In the same way, the friendship centre helped him develop a sense of himself as a product of his ancestry.

"Those are great resources for people moving off reserve whether you're status or not," he said. "There have to be bigger questions than whether you have a number. How do we identify who we are – and what does that mean, when we identify ourselves as a certain culture? For me, it was going to the friendship

centre, meeting Elders, becoming part of drum groups – becoming a citizen, someone who commits to that culture. I'm talking about helping each other, helping other people like you who are facing a lot of barriers. It's about that communal way of thinking."

Through the influence of those he encountered, he learned traditional craft styles. But he also learned about his ancestry – perhaps surprisingly – from his non-Native stepfather.

"I got my culture through my parents," he explained. "My stepfather was one of the first ones to bring me to a sweat lodge. He knew the importance of having that identity. Not everybody gets that."

How to weave different strands of identity are issues that Perley-Dutcher thinks will become more important in the coming years as Indigenous populations continue to grow, Indigenous cultures adapt and change.

"We really have to start asking serious questions as a lot of people are moving off-reserve and that identity's changing. It's going to continue to happen as people get more educated."

He noted that his mother was the first one in her family to graduate from high school, but today high school graduation is so common that it would be unheard of not to graduate – a big change from attitudes that were common as recently as the early 1990s.

"There's been a real shift in how we learn and how we survive," said Perley-Dutcher. "It's important to know that it's okay to be proud of who you are, even though you did not grow up Native on-reserve. I think that's going to continue to happen and we're going to have to come to terms with being proud of your culture, whether you're from on-reserve or off-reserve. It's just as important whichever perspective you come from."



Barbecuing blowout

Grill Eats & Drinks for your table

by Amy German

As grilling season winds down, having a fine summer spread to celebrate the harvest in the last warm days of summer is something on the minds of many.

If you want to go for BBQ gold, *Grill Eats & Drinks: Recipes for Good Times* is a great compilation recipe book that can help you host a great feast for the whole family.

Taking recipes from Sarah Deseran's *Picnics*, Diane Rossen Worthington's *The Seriously Simple Deck* and *Seriously Simple*, as well as

Bob Sloan's *Dad's Awesome Grilling Book* and *Tropical Deck Cocktails* by Mittie Hellmich, this handy celebration of hot-weather food will help you prepare a patio feast.

Featuring a wide variety of recipe options, you can pair Quick-Pickled Veggies or Summer Vegetable Guacamole Salsa with Grilled Chicken or Grilled Tequila-Lime Shrimp.

To sweeten the deal, you can also whip up some thirst-quenching Honey-Ginger Lemonade and then top the whole event off with a show-stopping Nectarine Tart.

So see for yourself that *Grill Eats & Drinks* can be the perfect literary companion to get your grill on for one last time.

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GRILLED SWEET POTATOES

Serves 4

- 4 sweet potatoes
- ½ cup [115 g] butter, melted
- 3 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them lengthwise into ¾-in- [2-cm-] thick slices. Bring 3 qt [2.8 L] water to a boil and add the sweet potato slices. Simmer until they are just starting to soften, about 12 minutes. Drain and let cool in a single layer on a large platter.

Combine the butter, honey, cinnamon and nutmeg in a small saucepan and place over low heat, stirring to combine. Brush the potato slices on both sides with the butter mixture and season with salt and pepper.

Prepare enough coal for a medium-hot charcoal fire, or preheat your gas grill on medium-high for 10 minutes with the lid closed.

Grill the sweet potato slices for about 6 minutes, turning once, until they are soft through the middle and nicely browned. Serve immediately.



HONEY-GLAZED SPARERIBS

Serves 4

Honey Glaze

- ⅔ cup [230 g] honey
- ½ cup [120 ml] freshly squeezed orange juice
- ¼ cup [60 ml] freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp Dijon-style mustard
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp ground ginger

Braising Liquid

- ½ cup [120 ml] white wine
- ½ cup [120 ml] soy sauce
- 1 bunch scallions, green parts only, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp finely chopped fresh ginger
- 8 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 6 tbsp [75 g] firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp Chinese five-spice powder
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 3 to 4 lb [1.4 to 1.8 kg] spareribs, cut into sections of ribs

To make the Glaze: In a medium bowl, stir together the honey, orange juice, lemon juice, soy sauce, mustard, sesame oil, curry powder and ground ginger. Set aside until ready to use, or refrigerate, covered, for up to 1 week. Let the glaze come to room temperature before using.

To make the Braising Liquid: In a large bowl, combine the wine, soy sauce, scallions, fresh ginger, garlic, brown sugar, five-spice powder, and cayenne.

Place the ribs in the bowl with the braising liquid, tossing them gently so they are all coated evenly.

Preheat the oven to 350°F [180°C]. Transfer the ribs and liquid to a baking pan, cover with foil, and bake in the centre of the oven for 1 hour. Let the ribs cool, then transfer them to a container or platter and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

Prepare enough coals for a medium-hot charcoal fire, or preheat your gas grill on medium-high for 10 minutes with the lid closed. Grill the ribs until they are heated through, about 15 minutes, turning and mopping them several times with the Honey Glaze so they are nicely coated. Serve immediately with lots of napkins.



ENGLISH BERRY SUMMER PUDDING

Serves 6

- 2 lb [910 g] fresh mixed berries (any combination of raspberries, blackberries, strawberries or blueberries)
- ½ cup [100 g] sugar
- ¼ cup [60 ml] water
- 1 to 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 8 to 12 slices (about ¼ in [6 mm] thick) stale, good-quality bread, such as challah
- 2 cups [480 ml] heavy cream

If using strawberries, trim and chop into pieces. Place the fruit, sugar, water and lemon juice in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Lower to a simmer and cook until the sugar has dissolved and the fruit begins to

get juicy, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir gently. The idea is not to cook the fruit as much as to get the berries to release their juices. Allow the mixture to cool.

Cut off the crust from the bread. In a large serving bowl, put a layer of the fruit and then top it with a layer of bread slices, being sure the bread covers the entire surface of the fruit. Continue to layer the fruit and bread, ending with the fruit. Cover the top with plastic wrap, weigh it down with something (such as a bag of rice or beans) to help the bread absorb all of the juices, and refrigerate for at least 1 day, or up to 2 days.

To serve, use a large spoon to scoop into serving bowls, being sure to get several layers of the bread and berries. Pour a few spoonfuls of cream over each serving.





Wabun Youth Gathering inspires hope

by Xavier Kataquapit

Life for a young person today is a challenge. They live in such a fast-paced world where much is expected of them. Back when I was a boy in my home community of Attawapiskat, I was outside most of the time playing with my friends or out on the land with my family. Today, young people are spending too much time indoors and on all kinds of devices hooked up to the Internet or used as stand-alone gaming platforms. I understand why young people are so wrapped up in technology today because I've also become addicted to this stuff.

This rings true even more so for First Nation youth. Even before this technology and the sedentary lifestyle it causes, Native people were experiencing an epidemic with diabetes and related health problems, such as heart disease. Now even fewer of our First Nation youth are getting the exercise they need. Neither are they getting those connections to family, friends or Elders in a healthy, personal or social way. Most of their contact is through a digital device and social media. They talk to each other on Facebook, texting and all sorts of instant chat or media-sharing services.

Some of this is beneficial but most of it is actually dangerous for the health of our young people. They need guidance in how to benefit from technology rather than get swept up by it and addicted to it. Big companies are making a lot of

money on our naivety when it comes to these technologies. They need more grounded, closer-to-earth relationships that also provide some education and a healthier way to communicate.

Every year I attend the annual Wabun Youth Gathering held at the Elk Lake Eco Centre near Matachewan First Nation. I have the privilege of watching young First Nation children join the gathering from the age of eight and then move up to a senior level that ends at age 18 and graduation. Many of the youth I have greatly benefited from this gathering. Some have moved on in education, some are working in resource development and some sadly are having a difficult time. One thing that is certain is that all of them realize there is a better path to follow for their lives. They may not be on that path all the time, but they know where it is and they know what they have to do to have a good life.

Every year Jean Lemieux of Wabun Health and now Faye Naveau, Regional Crisis Coordinator for Wabun and the event coordinator, design a time for the youth that gives them a pause in life, some fun and teachings on critical issues. These youth receive counseling from experts, Elders and cultural teachers on suicide, teen pregnancy, bullying, alcoholism and addictions, abuse, and family violence. They do all this in a comfortable wilderness setting by the Montreal River, which

some of their ancestors once used as a traditional highway.

Over the years I have watched these Wabun youth from different northeastern Ontario First Nations forge strong friendships. I have seen them develop from very shy and inward girls and boys to more confident teens with an idea of how things work and what it takes to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Thanks must always be given to the Chiefs of Wabun and their Executive Director Shawn Batise for having the vision to support a precious gift like this gathering for their youth. If a young Wabun individual learns how to deal with issues like teen pregnancy, alcohol and drug addictions, bullying and abuse, they have been given a powerful gift.

When I grew up nobody talked about any of these issues, so I really appreciate seeing these teachings now being provided to young First Nation people. It is amazing to think that more than a decade ago, a simple meeting between an Elder by the name of Thomas Saunders from Brunswick House First Nation and Wabun Health Director Jean Lemieux planted the seed. It was Saunderson's vision and dream that people and especially the youth be provided with a gathering that would allow them to forge strong friendships and to gain the knowledge needed to live good lives. It always takes just a few special people to make great things happen.

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